

**SASKATCHEWAN CO-OPERATIVE  
PRODUCERS LIMITED ★ REGINA, SASK.**

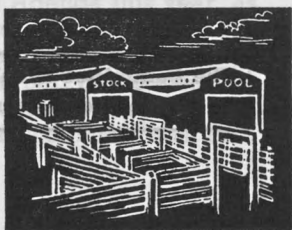
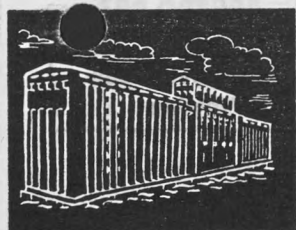
## Highlights of the Committee Conventions

**1951**



Life is like a journey, taken on a train,  
With a pair of travellers at each window pane.  
I may sit beside you all the journey through,  
Or I may sit elsewhere, never knowing you.  
But if fate should mark me to sit by your side,  
Let's be pleasant travellers; it's so short a ride.

***Committee Program***  
***No. 5***



# **Wheat Pool Committee Programme**

**No. 5**

**JULY, 1951**

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## **Suggested Agenda for the Conduct of Wheat Pool Committee Meetings**

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- 1.—Minutes of Last Meeting.
- 2.—Business Arising Out of Minutes and Unfinished Business and Correspondence.
- 3.—Read Committee Programme.
- 4.—Pool Business.
  - (a) Deliveries to Pool Elevators.
  - (b) Assembling and Shipping of Livestock.
  - (c) Flour Sales.
  - (d) The Western Producer Circulation.
- 5.—Pool Policies.
- 6.—Co-operative Education and Studies of the Co-operative Movement.
- 7.—Relations with other Co-operative Associations and Junior Organizations.
- 8.—New Business and Local Activities.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**The Committee should always invite their  
delegate to attend their Meeting**

# Highlights of the 1951 Committee Conventions

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Once again the Annual Wheat Pool sub-district Committee Conventions have been held, and the work of the committees reviewed and ideas and inspiration shared by all those in attendance. The 127 Committee Conventions were completed early in July. Of this number 90 were single sub-district Conventions, 35 were double, and at 2 Committee Conventions 3 sub-districts participated. The average attendance at the Committee Conventions this year was 58. One committee in attendance at a Convention was composed entirely of ladies, who are active in co-operative and community work in their home district.

Four charts were displayed in the Convention hall, and these showed:

Chart "A" —The overall ownership and control by the shareholders of "the Pool and its subsidiaries" with total net book assets of over \$22,000,000 and payments to members in cash and credit of over \$28,000,000.

Chart "B"—The blending value of Canadian wheat (1950 crop).

Chart "C"—The baking tests and loaf value using Grades No. 2-5 and Feed (1950 crop).

Chart "D"—The investment in Elevator Deductions and Commercial Reserves of \$18,755,991.24, and Deductions purchased and transferred to patron members of about \$10,000,000.

Minutes of the Convention are nearly all in, and copies will be sent to all secretaries of committees, to the delegate of the sub-district, the director, and the district representative.

**The Agenda**—The Agenda this year, as in previous years, featured reports of committee activities, and a discussion of these reports was an important part of the meeting. The strength of the Wheat Pool Organization is reflected in the activities of the Wheat Pool committees.

The Agenda also made provision for discussion of the following topics:

- (1) Better Annual Meetings.
- (2) Junior Clubs.
- (3) Selling Pool Co-op Flour.
- (4) Co-operative assembling, shipping and marketing of livestock.
- (5) How to increase Western Producer circulation.
- (6) How committees can make best use of Pool's educational programs, i.e., Citizenship Days, Co-op Schools, Reference Book, Committee Programs, etc.
- (7) Test Plots.
- (8) Car Supply and Car Order Book.

**Reports**—Generally speaking, reports from the secretaries of the committees were up to their usual high standard, although they varied greatly, some being excellent, showing careful preparation; others could hardly be described as a report. In some cases, the secretary was not present, and very little effort (in some cases) made to have a substitute give the report.

In a few instances, the discussion was not relevant to the purpose of a Committee Convention, and dealt with matters of purely local concern. The reports of the secretaries, however, indicate that a great number of local committee meetings were held during the past year, and the interest of the shareholders watched over and cared for in a thoughtful way.

The delegate, who is responsible for the organization work in his sub-district, summed up the activities of the committees, and outlined the possibilities for progress in his sub-district. He expressed appreciation of the work done by the committees, and stressed the need for committee and shareholders' active interest in their own Organization which is co-operatively owned and controlled by the shareholders.

**Discussion Groups**—For the first time, this year the discussion group method was tried out at all but two or three Committee

Conventions. The committee men expressed their appreciation of the value of this method of discussion, and want it continued next year. The topics for this year's discussion groups were well selected, and the material carefully prepared. Recommendations made by the groups were reported back to the general meeting for their consideration and action. Recommendations received will be considered carefully when preparing discussion material for 1952 Conventions.

### **Topic No. 1—"Better Annual Meetings."**

This topic is important to all, and even though nothing new in particular was recommended by the discussion groups, there was an awareness that the committee men and shareholders want good Annual Meetings, and if the attendance is poor it may be because of the indifference of some shareholders or that the meetings themselves are not packed with interest. It was mentioned that it was important to start the meeting on time, and it is just as important to have a time to stop.

The usual methods of advertising a meeting with posters and postcard notices, could be supported by putting in a general ring over the telephone, and by the committee men and key men making personal contacts with shareholders. Some committees served coffee and lunch. Where night meetings were held it was sometimes possible to work in a picture show, although the Annual Meeting is definitely a business meeting. One of the first things in arranging for a meeting is to see that the date does not conflict with any other meeting. Whenever possible, it is advisable to avoid holding a meeting in the Pool elevator office.

A special effort should be made to have the young people come to these meetings and take part, as they are the people who will have to deal with the problems of tomorrow. It was suggested that some of these young people should be elected to the committee where they will gain experience, not alone in co-operative work, but in the larger field of community service. As one committee man said: "Put the young men on as some of the older ones of us have combat fatigue."

The Agenda sent out at the time of our local Annual Meeting in November was found to be most helpful, and should be repeated this year.

### **Topic No. 2—"Junior Clubs."**

It is quite evident that many committee men fully appreciate the great value of Junior Clubs and Girls' Homecraft Clubs, not alone to the individual club members, but to the community as a whole.

In Grain and Livestock Clubs, the boys and girls learn the value of "quality," and just what good methods and good care will do. The lessons learned here under good leadership, coupled with the warm interest and support of friends and neighbors, are of enduring benefit to all concerned. Club work is of a practical nature, and is carried along in a co-operative spirit. As a result of this discussion, a number of committees will survey their community with a view to sponsoring and organizing a Junior Club. "They learn to do by doing."

### **Topic No. 3—"Selling Pool Co-op Flour."**

It was the considered opinion of all groups that there was no better way to increase the domestic sales of Pool Flour than using it, and "talking it up" to the neighbors. Some Committees, Co-operative Stores, and Women's Co-operative Guilds had sponsored Baking Contests. Pool Flour had been made available by Committees as door prizes at a number of community gatherings, as bonspiel prizes, etc. It was suggested that an advertising slip be placed in each bag containing brief information about the farmer-owned Mill.

Local committees, Pool agents, Co-op Store managers, and others have organized a sales canvass to secure orders so that flour could be shipped in carload lots. Some of the kinks are being ironed out of distribution and shipping costs held down as local sales are increased. Another suggestion was that advertising be kept up-to-date.

### **Topic No. 4—"Co-operative Assembling, Shipping and Marketing of Livestock."**

The first question considered, "Has the livestock population in our area declined?

If so, why?" The production of livestock in many areas has definitely declined. Some areas report a definite increase in hog production, and up in the Tisdale area they are now organizing a Pig Hatchery which will be operated on a co-operative basis.

There is ample pasture and feed grain in many areas, and this will be a factor in checking the decline of our livestock population. The reasons given for decline in the number of livestock include:

(a) help; (b) feed shortage; (c) price relationship of feed to current livestock prices; (d) average age of farmers is higher; (e) the high cost of breeding stock is a handicap to young men who are starting to farm; (f) the payment of income tax was a factor.

The recommendations included:

- (a) That the Wheat Pool committees, delegates, and agents be more active in supplying information and in arranging co-operative shipments of livestock by truck and by railroad, and in talking the benefits of co-operative marketing.
- (b) that there be closer co-operation between agent, committee, and shippers so that trucks and carload lots can be moved at a minimum of cost to the farmer who has livestock to sell.
- (c) that the Auction method of marketing be given some publicity, as many farmers have little knowledge of this method of selling livestock in public yards.

It was pointed out that inquiries and visitors are always welcome at all Pool agencies and yards.

### **Topic No. 5—"How to Increase Western Producer Circulation."**

This topic proved to be quite interesting and brought out a number of points as to the value of a weekly paper owned by the members of the Wheat Pool in Saskatchewan. This value was weighed against the cost, and the question was raised more than once as to whether or not enough local effort had gone

into the securing of subscriptions which has a great bearing on the cost of publishing.

The committee secretary or the Pool elevator agent can secure a list of subscribers for their point by writing to: "The Circulation Department, Western Producer, Saskatoon." One Wheat Pool committee, in co-operation with the Pool agent and the Manager of Co-operative Store, secured over 200 subscriptions at their shipping point. This shipping point also has the third highest sale of Pool Co-op flour in the Province.

One discussion group got under way by seeing to it that every member in the group had the opportunity to become a subscriber or to renew his subscription. Five subscriptions were secured. It is hoped that most committees and agents throughout the Province will do something about Western Producer subscriptions at their local shipping point.

**Topic No. 6**—"How Committees can make best use of Pool Educational Program."

Citizenship Days, One-Day Co-op Schools, and Farm Days were explained to the discussion groups by those who had sponsored one of these gatherings and could speak of their value and benefit to those who attended. As these gatherings are mainly for high school students and young people of the Community, many stated that this program should be sponsored by the local Co-operative groups at the earliest opportunity.

The One-Week Co-operative Schools held annually at Fort Qu'Appelle, Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, North Battleford, and Swift Current, are very well thought of, and on many occasions the Conventions heard the reports of students who had attended a One-Week Co-operative School.

The Reference Book, which is in every Pool elevator office for the use of the agent and the committee men, is not very well known, and the question was asked, "Why not run the material in this Reference Book in weekly sections on the Pool page of The Western Producer?"

Committee Programs, which are mailed to the chairman, secretary, delegate, and



Pool agent, also to others on request, are not used as much as might be desired. In discussing the Committee Program it was stated that time did not permit the reading of a Program at some committee meetings. A number of discussion groups recommended that the Program be mailed to all committee members.

Discussion on the Maintenance of Membership usually concluded with "that the job should be undertaken by the Pool elevator agents who could at any time arrange for the co-operation of the committee men." The importance of maintaining membership is evident in the fact that we started out in 1924 with about 50,000 members, and during the years 1935 to 1950 over 65,000 new members joined the Wheat Pool, and right today there is an active membership of about 100,000 members. The young people who are starting to farm on their own may not be aware of all the benefits of co-operation, so the opportunity is ours to place our experience before them.

### **Topic No. 7—"Test Plots."**

This topic was the least discussed of any topic, and yet those who did deal with it found much of interest and importance. These 322 Test Plot Supervisors, averaging about one in each municipality, are checking some of the new varieties of grain against one or more of the older varieties. This job is being done scientifically, and records are kept of insect, weed, hail, or gopher damage, along with details of rainfall and plant growth. This information, which is compiled along with the average yield per acre and such other data, is made available to the Dominion Experimental Farms and the University of Saskatchewan and to Pool members upon request. The accuracy of the work done by these Junior Co-operators is outstanding, and some Wheat Pool committees have arranged for groups to visit their nearest Test Plot, and for themselves the difference in the varieties of grain in the plot. On these visits, they have had an opportunity to learn at first hand about the varieties, and to express appreciation to the Test Plot Supervisor for the work he is doing in the interests of all.

## **Topic No. 8—"Car Supply and Car Order Book."**

This question and problem was discussed from a number of angles, and conclusions were very mixed. The Travelling Superintendents and Agents provided a lot of valuable information. It was felt that the time allotted for discussion was far too short, and additional information and more time would be required before a proper understanding could be reached. Most groups agreed and recommended that if the use of the Car Order Book would bring about a more satisfactory distribution of cars at a Point, the farmers should get full information and decide on what action they wish to take. There were several recommendations that at each Shipping Point the Wheat Pool committees form groups to discuss Car Order Book and its use under the Canada Grain Act. Others suggested that the Pool Elevators give a series of very short broadcasts, and also run a special section in The Western Producer.

The committees also want an up-to-date Committee Program on the subject, "The Use of the Car Order Book, and its Protection to the Grower."

### **International Wheat Agreement**

This was introduced as an extra topic at some meetings, and very briefly here are some of the points coming out of the discussion:

- (a) production costs in Canada must be kept in line with prices received for grain on export markets.
- (b) price received must cover cost of production.
- (c) price must provide for fair standard of living.
- (d) price must permit good farming practices.
- (e) price and quantity agreements between nations was definitely a forward step:

marketing  
good will  
providing a pattern for world  
trade and peace.

It was agreed that Governments must be a party to the Agreement in:

- (a) protecting producers and consumers from wide price fluctuations.
- (b) assuring consuming countries of a supply.
- (c) protecting producers in times of large surplus.
- (d) arranging finance between the governments.

## **Director's Report**

The Director told, as briefly as possible, facts about the year's business, and the construction policy for 1950-51 which includes 5 elevators and 100 annexes. This year Pool Elevators will handle about 130 million bushels of grain. Over 30 million bushels are in store at the present time, and about 250 elevators are plugged.

The Vegetable Oil Plant was handicapped this year because of the shortage of flax seed, and the Flour Mill turned out an average of about 1,200 barrels per day. There is a good export sale of flour, and a gradual increase in domestic sales of Pool Co-op Flour. It is very important that domestic sales be increased, and that the overhead cost of distribution be reduced by increasing the volume. New machinery has been ordered to increase the output of the Flour Mill to about 2,000 barrels per day. This increase is possible through the moving around of some of the machines and the speeding up of others, and an investment of about \$125,000 in additional equipment. This increase in the capacity per day will reduce the production costs per barrel of flour.

## **Policy**

The policy of the Organization with respect to marketing and prices was reviewed and questions answered.

## **Resolutions**

At most Conventions, resolutions were presented, discussed, and perhaps passed. All resolutions sent in from Committee Conventions are presented to the Board of

Directors and to the departments concerned. Every one of these resolutions is made available to the Resolutions Committee at the time of the Annual Meeting of Delegates.

## Conclusion

The question was asked one comman, who had attended many Conventions, "What did you get out of this meeting today?" "Well," said he, "We all got a lot of information from the delegate, the director, and others. I always read The Western Producer and the pamphlets from Head Office, but these discussion groups helped me see the great importance of our local committees."

"Why do you say that?"

"Man, can't you see that our local committees are a small working unit of democracy and democracy and co-operation won't grow unless we work at it. Groups bring us together and we loosen up, and certainly get the benefit of the other fellow's thinking. Now we'll go home and see what we can do about some things we talked about. Talking is great stuff, but after all democracy and co-operation start with you and me **ACTION.**"

